(c) Government has up-graded football to "Priority" category from "General" category in May, 2007. Government has provided financial assistance of Rs. 30.55 lakh during 2006-07, Rs. 68.15 lakh during 2007-08, Rs. 52.58 lakh during 2008-09 and Rs. 38.15 lakh during 2009-10 (till date) for foreign competition exposure and holding of national championships. The Government has allocated Rs. 10.00 crore for preparation of Indian football team for the forthcoming Asian Games 2010, which would cover training and coaching, procurement of equipment and consumables, international competitive exposure and supporting personnel.

(d) Although, the coach of the national team has suggested discontinuance of these tournaments, the All India Football Federation has indicated that they would like to restructure these tournaments.

(e) The Government is willing to provide all possible support to lift the standard of football in the country.

Schemes for tribal children for sports

†2255. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state whether Government has any scheme to select tribal children in the age group of 9 to 14 years for their latest sports talents and then to provide them intensive training throughout the year and establishing an academy for popular games of the State so that maximum utilization of their talents may be attained?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI PRATIK PRAKASHBAPU PATIL): A scheme of Special Area Games (SAG) is implemented by Sports Authority of India (SAI) under which, sports talent in tribal areas is identified and nurtured. The trainees, who are in the age group of 14 to 21 years, are admitted in the training centres on residential and non-residential basis. They are provided with sports kit, sports equipments, competition exposure, insurance, medical expenses, etc. There are 21 centres wherein 1142 boys and 775 girls are new being trained.

Assistance for sports infrastructure

†2256. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central assistance provided for construction of sports infrastructure by Central Government, which has been discontinued would be started again or the States would be provided funds separately for the said purpose;

(b) the reasons for the slow pace of the construction work of central regional centre of Sports Authority of India and by when the same would be implemented; and

(c) whether the services of National Institute for Sports (NIS) trained instructors earlier provided for the Central schemes as well as State schemes by Sports Authority of India which have been discontinued presently would be started again?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI PRATIK PRAKASHBAPU PATIL): (a) Government has now introduced a centrally

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.